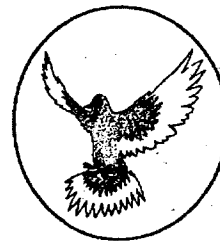


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Filner To Visit Valley Orthopedic Clinic Jan. 18

Congressman Robert Filner will be visiting the Valley Orthopedic Clinic, located at 352 East First Street, January 18 at 2 PM. A large percentage of the children treated at the clinic come from Mexico and must obtain a Humanitarian Visa from the Immigration Naturalization Services Department. "With the government's concern about terrorist activity, said Ana Maria de Anda, director of the clinic, children may no longer be able to get visas to come to the United States for treatment. Hundreds of Mexican children each month will not receive the medical attention they need. It makes me so sad to think about what will happen to all the children. "There are no other facilities in this region that offer free medical services.

Two hundred low-income children visit the free clinic monthly for medical check-ups, and treatment including, casting of broken limbs, and fitting for orthopedic braces and artificial limbs. Patients who need orthopedic surgery as well as those diagnosed with cataracts and strabismus (crossing of the eyes) are sent to a number of participating hospitals. Orthopedic patients are sent to Shriners Hospital in Los Angeles and to the Los Angeles Orthopedic Hospital; cataract and other eye surgery patients are sent

to the Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center where they receive free medical treatment. The services of the Valley Orthopedic Clinic are provided by a number of volunteer doctors from Los Angeles and San Diego who bring medical supplies with them every month. Artificial limbs and orthopedic braces are also custom made for patients at the clinic.

Families are provided with lunch while waiting for patients to receive treatment and on their way to Los Angeles hospitals. The clinic also owns a halfway house in Mexicali, Estancia, where families with children receiving treatment at the Clinic can stay "Many families don't have money for food, so we help them with their expenses," said Wayne Van de Graff, one of the clinic founders.

Donors including Robert Nichols, co-founder, DOVES, and various grants since it was founded in 1961 have provided necessary funding for the clinic. Although all of the services provided by voluntary doctors are free, the clinic must pay overhead, expenses such as utilities, phones, rent, and for materials to make casts and build orthopedic braces. More than 125,000 low-income children from Mexico and the United States have received medical attention.